DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CRC/MR
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Mr. Nitze

Mr. Thurston

Spain

7/11/51

The discussions regarding Spain which took place yesterday in our Staff meeting and the Secretary's Office seemed to me to show the need for a decision with respect to one point--i.e., do the advantages of an arrangement between us and Spain outweigh the damage it would do to our relations with France and Great Britain? The intensity of French and British feeling against the mere discussion with Franco of such an arrangement has been formally revealed to us.

While the arguments adduced by the British and French in opposition to an arrangement with Franco could be answered adequately, from our point of view, we would still, if we persisted in our plan, have done so in the face of unusually strong protests from two of our most important European associates in the Western defense program. The only justification for such a course of action would be overriding military considerations put forward and supported by our military authorities.

Paris Embassy telegram 5068, February 28, 7 p.m. (copy attached) cites the arguments against an arrangement with Franco at that time--and concludes with the statement that General Eisenhower was in general agreement with the views expressed. It is possible that General Eisenhower's views at this time may be different, but this is not a matter of record in the papers I have seen. It would seem advisable that the Secretary, in his meeting with General Marshall and others this afternoon, elicit a definitive military appraisal of the importance of Spain in our present planning. Admiral Sherman's contemplated mission to Madrid should be suspended pending the decision mentioned in the first paragraph of this paper.

Attachment: Copy 746, tel. 5068 from Paris, 2/28/51, 7 pm

S/P:WThurston:vh

TOP SECRET